

For when it's time

...to tell your story

...to get answers

...to be heard

Why Consider Victim Offender Dialogue?

Every crime is unique, and so are the reasons why crime victims and survivors participate in the VOD process. Many victims and survivors feel frustrated by the limitations of the traditional court process, in which offenders may be tried and convicted without ever taking direct accountability for their actions. Some deeply desire an opportunity to convey the impact the crime has had on them and their family. Some have questions that only the offender can answer. Some want reassurance that the offender will not harm others. Since many of these thoughts, feelings, and questions continue to linger for years after the crime, many victims and survivors feel that they feel stuck in their healing journey and wish for an opportunity to meet with or exchange information with the offender in their case. A trained facilitator can help victims and survivors decide whether VOD is right for them and when it is time.

"We wanted to make sure he was held accountable for what he had done and that he was remorseful."

- Family Survivor of Vehicular Homicide

In the wake of crime...

"I have important questions that only the offender can answer."

"In court, the offender never even looked me in the eye."

"I need them to know how they have impacted my life."

Why did this happen to me?
Why my loved one?"

"I want to know whether they are truly sorry and if they will hurt someone else."



Unanswered Questions?

**VICTIM
OFFENDER
DIALOGUE
IN COLORADO**

What is a Victim Offender Dialogue?

Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) is a facilitated dialogue between the victims or survivor of a violent crime and the offender in their case. The VOD process is designed to allow victims and survivors the opportunity to be heard and to have their questions answered. Additionally, the dialogue process allows the offender to hear and understand the effect of their actions and to take responsibility for the harm they have caused. While the VOD process can lead to healing or other benefits for the victim or survivor, it is **not** expected to lead to forgiveness. The VOD is about meeting the victim or survivor's needs, whatever they are, while maintaining a safe environment for victim and offender.

“As a victim, I needed to have an opportunity to speak. I needed to have an opportunity to go before him. This program allowed me to have that.”

- Family Survivor of Vehicular Homicide



Is My Case Eligible?

In Colorado, crimes eligible for the VOD process include those listed in the Colorado's Victim Rights Amendment (VRA) such as murder, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, vehicular homicide, assault, and robbery. Currently, VOD is not available for victims and survivors of sexual assaults or intimate partner violence. A trained facilitator will assess your case and determine whether it is eligible.

Talk to a trained facilitator about your options.

MONICA CHAMBERS

Victim Services Coordinator
Department of Corrections
Direct (719) 226-4709
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The offender is in prison or on parole.

GREG BROWN

Chief Probation Officer
Probation VOD Coordinator
Direct (303) 579-7944
greg.brown@judicial.state.co.us

The offender is serving probation.

SPIRO KOINIS

Victim Services/RCJ Coordinator
Division of Youth Services
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The offender is a juvenile in a DYS facility or on parole.

MARY MCGHEE

Victim Outreach Coordinator
Colorado Organization for
Victim Assistance (COVA)
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None of the above or not sure.

What is the Process Like?

First, all dialogue processes are victim-initiated. The offender **cannot** initiate a dialogue. All parties must voluntarily agree to participate. The offender must take responsibility for their actions that resulted in the offense. A trained facilitator team will work with the offender's supervising agency to assess this. Facilitators then conduct thorough screenings and preparation meetings separately with the victim/survivor and the offender to ensure safety and readiness for participation. Victims and survivors can meet with their facilitators as long as needed and can change their mind at any time.

When everyone is ready, a facilitated dialogue takes place in a safe, structured environment. The victim/survivor makes decisions that guide the dialogue. Some victims and survivors may choose to meet with a surrogate offender, or to exchange information in the form of letters instead of meeting face to face. Your facilitators will help you decide what is right for you.

“We got *control*. We were able to say ‘I want it go like this’ ... and it did.”

-Family Survivor of Murder